

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 04499 262342Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 H-01 /043 W
-----000848 270928Z /11
R 260850Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1339
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, KS, US, JA
SUBJ: PRISONERS - SO CHUN-SIK

REF: SEOUL 4420

1. EMBASSY VISITED MAY 26 BY TWO AMERICAN STUDENTS FROM OSAKA, JAMES LEWIS AND ELAINE LIPTON, WHO ARE IN KOREA IN CONNECTION WITH PROSPECTIVE RELEASE FROM PRISON OF SO CHUN-SIK (SUH JOON-SHIK), KOREAN RESIDENT OF JAPAN NOW IN PRISON IN CHONJU ON ESPIONAGE CHARGES. THEY CARRIED LETTER FROM ROK EMBASSY WASHINGTON, DATED MAY 20, 1977, TO A US CONGRESSMAN, INDICATING MR SO'S SENTENCE EXPIRED MAY 27, 1978. THEY WERE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT SO MIGHT BE RETAINED IN CUSTODY UNDER PROVISIONS OF ROK LAW THAT PERMITS CONTINUED DETENTION AFTER REGULAR SENTENCE OF CONVICTED SAGENTS WHO DO NOT REPENT.

2. LEWIS AND LIPTON SAID THEY ARE HERE WITH GROUP OF JAPANESE FROM "SAVE THE SO BROTHERS COMMITTEE" (SO'S BROTHER SO SUNG IS SERVING A LIFE SENTENCE ON ESPIONAGE CHARGES). PLANS HAD CALLED FOR ONE SOCIALIST DIET MEMBER TO ACCOMPANY THE GROUP, BUT THEY WERE NOT SURE IF HE HAD COME OR NOT. THE ADVISE THAT LEADER OF THE GROUP HERE IS ONE MIZUNO
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NAOKI. THEIR PLAN IS TO PROCEED TO CHONJU TO SEE IF SO IS RELEASED AND TO ASSIST HIM AS NEEDED. THEY SAID THEY WOULD ADVISE EMBASSY IF HE WAS RELEASED OR NOT. (THEY SAID, HOWEVER, THAT SO'S MOTHER, WHO IS LIVING IN JAPAN, HAD NOT COME TO KOREA ON THIS OCCASION.)

3. COMMENT: PUBLIC SECURITY LAW OF 1975 DOES PROVIDE

FOR AUTHORITIES TO RETAIN IN DETENTION PERSONS THEY
CONSIDER "DANGEROUS" WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONVICTED
UNDER NATIONAL SECURITY RELATED OFFENSES. ALTHOUGH NOT
PREVIOUSLY USED, GOVERNMENT CRITICS, INCLUDING KNCC IN
DOCUMENTS CITED REFTEL, CLAIM ROKG IS PLANNING TO APPLY
THIS PROVISION IN SO'S CASE. IN VIEW PREVIOUS CONGRESSIONAL
AND OTHER INTEREST IN THIS CASE WE ARE INQUIRING WHETHER
SO IS IN FACT DUE FOR RELEASE TOMORROW.
STERN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRISONERS WELFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SEOUL04499
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780224-0838
Format: TEL
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780514/aaaaalby.tel
Line Count: 71
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ddcfb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SEOUL 4420
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2548191
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRISONERS - SO CHUN-SIK
TAGS: SHUM, KS, US, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ddcfb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014